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Bureau of Land Management

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## **BLM PREPARES FOR BURNS ALONG THE LOWER BLACKFOOT CORRIDOR**

MISSOULA (February 24, 2005) - The Missoula Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing for prescribed burns in the Blackfoot, Dunnigan, Whiskey Gulch, and Buck Creek drainages located within the Lower Blackfoot River Corridor about five miles north of Potomac. The burns will take three to six days to complete and will take place when weather and fuel conditions are favorable, but could occur anytime during the next two months.

The prescribed burns will reduce the amount of fuel in the area by removing the dense Douglas-fir understory and stimulating shrub growth important for big game winter range. By removing small "ladder fuels," the risk of large, catastrophic wildfires is also reduced. Fuels specialists are attempting to restore the historic ponderosa pine forest, characterized by large diameter pine with intermittent openings.

The 428-acre treatment will utilize both ground crews using drip torches for ignition and a helicopter for aerial ignition. If you have questions, or want more information about the prescribed burns, please contact Shelagh Fox or Katie Albritton at the Missoula Field Office, phone 329-3914.